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TO THE

REVEREND PASTORS,

AND OTHER

ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY,

OF THE

Archdioceſs of Dublin.

Troy (J. T.) K.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

REV. SIRS,

THE following Exhortation and Form of Excommunication are to be diſtinctly read and enforced at each Maſs, on the Sunday next after the receipt of them; and as often afterward as you may conſider expedient. You will alſo publiſh them otherwiſe, as generally and extenſively as poſſible.

I am very ſincerely,
Your moſt devoted Servant in Chriſt,

JOHN THOMAS TROY.

DUBLIN, 22d June, 1798.

To the Rev. Paſtors, and other Roman Catholic Clergy of the Arch-dioceſs of Dublin,

DEAR CHRISTIANS,

ALTHOUGH you muſt be ſenſible, that nothing has been neglected on our part, to inſpire you with ſentiments becoming good Chriſtians and uſeful Members of ſociety, ſo forcibly inculcated by the principles of our holy Religion, we find it again indiſpenſably neceſſary to exhort you in the moſt ſolemn manner, to a loyal and peaceable demeanour, and reſpectful obedience to the laws.

You cannot forget the earneſtneſs with which we have recently cautioned you againſt the inſidious arts of irreligious and deſigning Agitators, who wiſh to deceive and involve you in their rebellious attempts to ſubvert the government of our moſt gracious Sovereign in this kingdom, and the juſt ſubordination eſtabliſhed by Divine Providence, for the preſervation and benefit of ſociety.

We cannot ſufficiently expreſs our poignant grief, that this paſtoral ſolicitude for your ſpiritual and temporal proſperity, has not made the deſired impreſſion on many; who, ceaſing to be Chriſtians, obſcure and diſgrace the bright name

of

of ROMAN CATHOLIC, which they affect to retain, by their decided contempt of Eccleſiaſtical and every other authority: Their flattering Seducers are perfectly convinced, that the tranſition from diſreſpect towards ſpiritual Guides, to the contempt of temporal Rulers, and rejection of legal reſtraint, is eaſy and rapid: Hence, their inceſſant efforts to vilify the Prieſthood by calumniating the Clergy, whom they repreſent to the unreflecting multitude, as inſenſible to the ſituation of the poor; with a malignant deſign to deſtroy the ſalutary influence of Religion and its Miniſters; without which, anarchy and licentiouſneſs muſt neceſſarily ſucceed good order and government. The fatal effects of theſe poiſonous inſinuations on numberleſs perſons of our flock, are every day more viſible and alarming. What elſe than an utter contempt of Religion and its Miniſters, could have induced Roman Catholics, in open defiance of our earneſt and repeated admonitions, to aſſociate with various perſons ſtyling themſelves *United Iriſhmen*, for the moſt atrocious purpoſes, under the ſpecious ſanction of what they ſacrilegiouſly denominate an oath? For have we not, as the Miniſters of the Religion they profeſs, have not the firſt Apoſtles of that Religion itſelf; nay, have not the common light of reaſon and the common feelings of nature, proclaimed to the moſt ignorant and careleſs amongſt them, the deep wickedneſs and abſolute nullity of an oath, which has rapine, murder, and rebellion for its object?—— Oh! who will grant us a fountain of tears, to bewail the crimes of our people and our country, and to waſh away the foul ſtain on our national character, imprinted by the hands of the ungrateful Rebels!

We

We little expected that any of our beloved flock, would aſſociate with the diſloyal or the ſeditious; and much leſs that the ſacred name of Religion would be profaned, as we hear it is, to juſtify their moſt irreligious and atrocious conduct: We are equally ſurpriſed at hearing, that the Rebellion is conſidered by ſome, (few indeed) as the reſult of a pre-concerted plot, deviſed by the Roman Catholics of Ireland to deſtroy the Proteſtant Religion and the Eſtabliſhed Government. Under this accumulation of infatuation in many, and of obloquy in ſome, we conſider it our duty to remove both, ſo far as in us lies, by declaring in the name of the all-ſeeing GOD, and of the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, as we have often done on other occaſions.

I. That we abhor and deteſt the rebellious, or ſeditious, or riotous proceedings of perſons aſſociated under the title of *United Iriſhmen*, or *Defenders*, or of any others, tending to injure the property or perſon of any one, or to diſturb the public peace. We condemn theſe tranſgreſſions as contrary to the Laws of God, to the Principles and Canons of the Roman Catholic Church, and to the dictates of reaſon and humanity: Wherefore, we conſider the tranſgreſſors as a diſgrace to Chriſtianity, and as the outcaſts of ſociety.

II. In like manner we declare, that the aſſociation oaths of *United Iriſhmen*, *Defenders*, or others, to effect a revolution or ſubvert his Majeſty's government in this kingdom, inſtead of being in any manner binding, are only bonds of iniquity, and conſequently unlawful, ſinful, wicked and damnable.

We make theſe ſolemn declarations in conformity with the principles of our holy Religion, and with our uniform language whenever a ſpirit of combination has prevailed amongſt *White Boys*, *Right Boys*, or any other deſcription of people including Roman Catholics.

But the real fact is, deareſt Brethren, that the preſent diſturbances are contrary to the principles of all Chriſtians, and have originated in the want of Religion, or in the habitual neglect of its duties, and in contempt for its faithful Miniſters. An infidel innovating ſpirit, impatient under legal reſtraint, has unhappily prevailed from the commencement of the French Revolution. Jacobiniſm has operated fatally on the minds of too many, eſpecially of the lower orders, led aſtray by deſigning agitators, nominally Proteſtants, Preſbyterians, and Roman Catholics, but in fact Atheiſts, Deiſts, or Indifferentiſts; who, for their own ſelfiſh purpoſes, have deceived the multitude, by the magical ſounds of *Liberty* and *Equality*; ſounds operating as charms on the too credulous poor, and maddening them to procure, by organized tumult or any means, Freedom, without reſtraint from the conſtituted Authorities, and Property by the pillage of their more opulent neighbours. We have hitherto only heard of theſe ſad conſequences of modern French Liberty and Equality having taken place on the continent. Sorry we are, extremely ſorry indeed, that our early admonitions to prevent them in this kingdom, have been diſregarded by ſo many dupes of a Jacobinical Faction, intent only on the ſubverſion of Eccleſiaſtical and Civil conſtituted Authority.

The apoſtacy of any Catholic from conſcientious loyalty, and love of order, inſpired by his Religion, is lamentable; but no energy of lan-

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guage cana dequately expreſs, what every good Chriſtian of any denomination muſt feel, when a Clergyman profanes his peaceful miniſtry, by promoting, exciting or countenancing inſurrection, ſedition or diſorder of any kind. How painful then muſt it be to us in particular, to hear that ſome Prieſts are Rebels, and the Encouragers of Rebellion! that others have excited unfavourable ſuſpicions of their civil principles, by intemperate loquacity and raſh conduct!

We know that the number of theſe ſacrilegious prevaricators muſt be comparatively very ſmall, compoſed of the inſane, or the ignorant, or the immoral, or the proud and diſobedient to their reſpective ſpiritual Superiors. Such characters are to be found, alas! in the miniſtry of every religious perſuaſion. France has her unprincipled conſtitutional Prieſts and apoſtate Biſhops: Amongſt the Apoſtles choſen by Chriſt himſelf there was a Traitor. In the general deluſion, and the ſyſtem of allurement and intimidation, invariably purſued by the promoters of Rebellion and their dupes, after the example of French Jacobins, it was rather to be wiſhed than expected, that every Clergyman of every perſuaſion and character, would act in ſtrict conformity to the principles of his religion, and follow the inſtructions and example of his Eccleſiaſtical Superior. Far be it from us to attempt, or inſinuate, any apology or excuſe for rebellious or ſeditious Prieſts: We reprobate and deplore their conduct, whether the conſequence of depravity or frailty.

When Inſtructions, Exhortations, and Excluſion from the Holy Table, denounced againſt ſinners, prove ineffectual in reclaiming them from their vices, or dangerous errors, the Chief Paſtors of the Church are authoriſed, and conſcientiouſly

ſcientiouſly obliged, to reſort to Excommunication, the laſt remedy in their power againſt obſtinate and contumacious Tranſgreſſors; thereby ſeparating them from the Body of the Church, leſt, by a further communication with the Innocent and Righteous, the whole flock ſhould become infected and corrupt. This authority was exerciſed by St. Paul, (1 *Cor.* v.) and in every ſucceeding age of the Church to our own time: Chriſt himſelf commands that incorrigible Offenders, refuſing to hear the Paſtors of the Church, ſhould be conſidered as *Heathens and Publicans*, (*Matth.* xviii. 17.) that is, as outcaſts of the Church, cut off from her pale, and deprived of her benefits.

We have inſtructed and exhorted repeatedly; we have declared all thoſe engaged in any combination againſt the State, incapable of receiving Abſolution in the tribunal of penance, without previous ſincere ſorrow for their diſloyalty, and a firm purpoſe of amendment: we have conjured them to prove the ſincerity of their repentance by delivering up their arms, and by uniting with his Majeſty's faithful ſubjects in the moſt open and decided manner, for the ſupport of Religion and the Conſtitution. Our paſtoral efforts have been attended with ſome ſucceſs. Many, by the efficacy of divine Grace have been converted: others continue obſtinate. All remedies having proved ineffectual with reſpect to theſe incorrigible Rebels, we find ourſelves compelled to denounce them excommunicated in manner following, after a brief explanation of the ceremonies of BELL, BOOK, EXTINCTION OF CANDLE-LIGHTS, AND SHUTTING THE CHAPEL DOORS.

I. The ri[illegible]ing of the Bell proclaims that the Excommunication has been publiſhed.

II. The

II. The ſhutting of the Maſs-Book ſignifies that the excommunicated perſon has forfeited all the benefits promiſed to the obſervers of the Goſpel, which he has renounced.

III. The extinction of Candle-lights denotes that he is deprived of the title he had to Heaven by the light of Chriſtian Faith received in Baptiſm, and that he is condemned to the darkneſs of Hell.

IV. The ſhutting of Doors announces him excluded from Catholic Communion and ſeparated from the Faithful.

SENTENCE OF EXCOMMUNICATION.

We cannot find words to expreſs our deep regret and anguiſh at the unnatural Rebellion which prevails in ſome parts of this Province and Archdioceſs. Our grief is increaſed by the afflicting conſideration, that many of our Communion, and, as it is ſaid, even ſome Prieſts (we mention this with horror) are engaged in it as encouragers or abettors. Nothing on our part has been omitted to preſerve our beloved flock from deluſion and the evil machinations of inſidious but rapacious wolves in ſheep's cloathing, ſeeking to devour the lambs in order to effect their ſelfiſh purpoſes. Too many of the ſheepfold have, nevertheleſs, ſtrayed from the wholeſome paſture and beaten path pointed out to them by the faithful Shepherds. They have in an evil hour adopted principles and practices condemned by our holy Religion; which commands ſubmiſſion to all placed in authority over us, and obedience to the laws in temporal and civil concerns. A compliance with theſe Chriſtian duties had honorably diſtinguiſhed

guiſhed the Roman Catholics of Ireland in the worſt times, and would have continued to preſerve their loyal character unimpeached and unſullied, if the lower orders of their communion had not been ſeduced, by the deſigning or the giddy admirers of modern French levelling principles, from their former peaceable habits; and deluded into an expectation of a favourable change in their ſituation, from the promiſed enjoyment of unreſtrained liberty and unqualified equality: The moſt impious, even blaſphemous publications, the moſt ſeditious and inflammatory libels have been circulated with uncommon induſtry, in every form, and at the loweſt prices, amongſt the too credulous poor, to foſter this fatal deluſion, and indiſpoſe them againſt the conſtituted authorities; on the ruins of which they were taught by irreligious agitators to expect happineſs. Under theſe deſtructive impreſſions, they have dared to outrage the laws, and erect the ſtandard of Rebellion. Carnage, Conflagration, Pillage, and other evils innumerable, have ſucceeded to former peaceable habits and induſtrious purſuits. Unawakened to a ſenſe of duty by theſe calamities, deaf to our re-iterated remonſtrances and exhortations, unmindful of the ſolemn declarations made by the loyal, moſt reſpectable, and beſt informed Catholics, Clergy and Laity, in every part of the kingdom, the deſigning and the deluded obſtinately perſevere in their diſloyal and wicked career.

In ſuch circumſtances, we are called upon by a conſcientious ſenſe of duty, by an imperious neceſſity of vindicating the purity of our faith and civil principles, when either may be calumniated or ſuſpected; *to purge out the leaven, and put out the evil one from amongſt you, as a little leaven corrupteth the whole maſs.* (1 Cor. v.)

Wherefore,

Wherefore, by the authority of JESUS CHRIST, our bleſſed Redeemer, communicated by him to his Apoſtles, and their ſucceſſors in the ſacred miniſtry; and in conformity with the conſtant practice of the Church; after due deliberation and invocation of the Divine Spirit, We, hereby, in the moſt ſolemn, formal and explicit manner, ſeparate from the myſtical body of the Holy, Catholic, Apoſtolical and Roman Church, all and every one of our religious Communion in the Arch-dioceſs of Dublin, directly or indirectly concerned in the preſent Inſurrection and Rebellion within this kingdom; whether under the denomination of *United Iriſhmen*, *Defenders*, or aſſociated under any other title or appellation whatever, tending to promote or encourage the ſame: We hereby declare them, their Inſtigators, Adviſers, and Abettors of any kind, a diſgrace to Chriſtianity, and unworthy of Catholic Communion, from which we cut them off by the ſword of Excommunication, as rotten and putrid members; leſt by a further communication with the faithful committed to our paſtoral care, they ſhould further ſpread infection, and diſhonour the Church; which they have already ſo greatly ſcandalized and injured. You are, therefore, to conſider them as deprived of all hope of Heaven, and conſigned to ſuffer eternal torments with the Devil and his Angels, unleſs by ſincere converſion and exemplary repentance they ſhall atone for their diſobedience to the laws of God and the Church, and return to their allegiance to our gracious Sovereign, and reſpect for legal authority. You are to avoid every communication with them, eſpecially in religious rites: You are not to eat nor to drink with them, nor ſalute them; but in every reſpect to conſider them as *Heathens and Publicans*, excluded from the

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Church which they deſpiſed. The infamous Prieſts of this Arch-dioceſs who, unmindful of their ſacred character, and debaſing it, favor or abet the mentioned Inſurrection and Rebellion in any manner, are moſt particularly comprehended in this Sentence of Excommunication; and conſequently, as We hereby declare, ſuſpended from the exerciſe of all clerical functions. You will, therefore, commit a grievous ſin by communicating with them in any manner, and incur an Excommunication: By knowingly and willingly recurring to them in their miniſterial capacity, by hearing their Maſs, by receiving any Sacrament from them, you will aggravate the ſin by participating in the ſacrilege and profanation of their miniſtry: You are to ſhun theſe vile prevaricators and apoſtates from Religion, Loyalty, Honor, and Decorum, as monſters of depravity, degrading their ſacred character, and as the moſt criminal and deteſtable of rebellious and ſeditious culprits.

No one of thoſe excommunicated by the preſent Sentence, whether in clerical orders, or lay perſons of either ſex, can be admitted to the Sacrament of reconciliation or any other, even when dying, unleſs they previouſly expreſs, or otherwiſe manifeſt their deteſtation of the preſent Rebellious proceedings, and of the principles on which every Aſſociation againſt his Majeſty and the Conſtitution is grounded, and ſolemnly promiſe or manifeſt their determination, that in caſe of recovery they will inſtantly ſecede from and abjure it, and never more be concerned in it.

If, after the publication of theſe our ſolemn Declarations and Sentence of Excommunication, any one of this Archdioceſs profeſſing the Roman Catholic Religion, whether in clerical orders, or lay perſon of either ſex, ſhall in any manner unleſs compelled

pelled thereto by force, concur in promoting the preſent Inſurrection and Rebellion, whether by action, word, writing, or meſſage; or deſignedly attempt to join the Inſurgents and Rebels, or any party of them, and ſhall depart this life after refuſing to expreſs or manifeſt the above-mentioned abjuration and promiſe, he or ſhe is to be conſidered as having died impenitent and unworthy of Catholic Communion, from which they had been ſeparated by this Sentence of Excommunication; and conſequently deprived of the uſual funeral rites preſcribed by the Catholic Church. Perſons really forced to join the Rebels, or co-operate in their deſigns or proceedings, do not incur this Excommunication whilſt deprived of their liberty or free agency; but when reſtored to liberty, which they are obliged to procure by every lawful means, they cannot be admitted to any Sacrament without the mentioned abjuration and promiſe. Should they refuſe to expreſs or manifeſt them, they are to be conſidered as having incurred the Excommunication pronounced by this awful, and, to Us, moſt painful Sentence.

May God, in his infinite mercy, inſpire the Inſurgents with timely compunction for their enormous Treaſon and Rebellion; and prevent the bitter recollection in the minds of Roman Catholics amongſt them, of their having diſregarded our repeated exhortations, and this dreadful Sentence of Excommunication, extorted from Us by their obſtinacy! They will in vain cry for pardon in Hell, from which there is no redemption!

We beſeech you, Dear Chriſtians, to join us in fervent prayer for their ſincere and ſpeedy converſion, as an indiſpenſable condition of reconciliation with the Church, and our offended moſt gracious Sovereign: By delaying it, they will only

only prolong their miſeries in this life, and expoſe themſelves to damnation in the next.

Almighty and moſt merciful God, the comfort of the ſorrowful and afflicted, the ſupport of thoſe who are burthened, give ear, we beſeech thee, to our ſupplications; that, finding thy mercy preſent with us in our tribulation and neceſſities, our mourning may be converted into joy pleaſing unto thee. Through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

J. T. TROY.

DUBLIN, 22d June, 1798.

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